GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2908
ANSWERED ON:15.03.2016
Inviolate Forests
Karunakaran Shri P.;Rajesh Shri M. B.

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) the current status of declaration/ notification of inviolate forests in the country;
(b) whether the Government proposes to place the said information and maps on the public domain for comments and if so, the details thereof; and
(c) the time by which it is likely to be finalised?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

(SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR)

(a) to (c) The Group of Ministers (GoM) constituted by the Cabinet Secretariat vide their O.M. No. 121/4/3/2010-Cab. dated 03.02.2011 to consider the environmental and developmental issues relating to coal mining and other development projects, in its fifth meeting held on 20th September 2011 inter-alia suggested that identified pristine forest areas where any mining activity would lead to irreversible damage to the forests should be barred from any kind of non-forest activity. The GoM further suggested that all such forests which can never be regenerated to the desired quality should be protected. The GoM therefore suggested that a committee comprising experts in the field can be constituted to identify such forests.

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) vide order dated 30.03.2012 therefore, constituted a Committee under Chairmanship of the then Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Forests to formulate draft parameters for identification of pristine forest areas where any non-forestry activity would lead to irreversible damage, and such other forest areas which need to be conserved and protected to meet the larger objective of the long term conservation of forests and wildlife resources in the country. The Committee suggested parameters to identify such areas, to be called as inviolate forest areas.

The said report of the Committee was circulated to States, Union territories and concerned Ministries in the Central Government for comments. A copy of the report was also placed on website of the MoEFCC for comments of other stakeholders.

The committee was reconstituted under Chairmanship of the Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change on 4th March 2014 which considered the parameters and further refined the draft parameters. These draft parameters are presently being examined by the MoEF & CC and final decision will be taken soon by the Ministry and subsequent action will be taken accordingly.
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